



WILDCAT

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Georgia Army Reservists bring firepower to war

Story by Sgt. Frank N. Pellegrini
U.S. Army Reserve Public Affairs Office

CAMP ARIFJAN, KUWAIT — “It can be a scary place to work. I mean, there’s enough killing power in here for, well, for a whole war,” said Sgt. Theresa Chatman of the Army Reserve’s 802nd Ordnance Company from Gainesville, Ga.

Inside the rows of the ammunition bunkers at the edge of Camp Arifjan are the millions of rounds and rockets, bombs and bullets, flares and missiles that are the teeth of war, the deadly devices that power the U.S. military’s mighty weapons. And the men and women that work among them know precisely what they’re dealing with.

“You have to know your training – each bomb, each round, what it does, how it kills, how it reacts – because not knowing is bad for your health. And then you have to deal with the knowledge that because of what’s in these buildings, you’re standing every day in one of the places the enemy would most like to destroy,” she added.

The 802nd Od. Co. is part of the mix of active and reserve elements staffing this ammunition supply point under the command of the 38th Ordnance Group. The unit does the basic work required in any storage facility – receive the inventory from the manufacturer, keep track of the stock and make sure it gets shipped out safely and on time to where it needs to be.

The Ammunition Supply Point’s customers are special. They’re the troops in Basra, Baghdad and Tikrit whose mission and very lives depend on the timely arrival of the unit’s stock.

“You never forget there’s a war on, and if it’s not



Photo by Sgt. Frank N. Pellegrini

Sergeant Theresa Chatman and Sgt. 1st Class Vaughn Daly, 802nd Ordnance Company, Gainesville, Ga., note the serial numbers on a load of Multi-Launch Rocket System missiles at the Ammunition Supply Point at Camp Arifjan in Kuwait.

Iraq, there are always the terrorists,” said Sgt. 1st Class Vaughn Daly, from Lawrenceville, Ga., who, besides helping move and track ammunition,

maintains the forklifts, trucks and other rolling stock that carry the ordnance to the combat soldiers.

“The NBC alarms are always going off, which means we’re working in our gas masks,” he said, referring to the sirens that signal the threat of a nuclear, biological or chemical attack on the facility. “A SCUD missile that hit near Kuwait City shook the ground here – which sure reminds you what you’re working with. This place is such a prime target, and you sure don’t want to be moving a pallet full of grenades if something does hit.”

Chief Warrant Officer Otis Dais, from Stone Mountain, Ga., added, “We all want to do what we have to do and go home – and we want as many people to go home as possible. We know we’re an important part of this effort. There’s manpower, there’s equipment, and there’s us, and without us, the fighters can’t do their jobs. So we make sure we do our jobs right.”

Dais said although they’re not close to the battle, they can still figure out what’s going on.

“We’re all the way in the rear, but we can usually tell how things are going. If a unit fighting in a particular place has already gotten their basic load, and we keep getting orders to re-supply, well, you know they’re going through it. Before the big push into Baghdad, we were running around here like crazy. Everybody out there was stocking up. Now, things are slowing down. It’s as good as watching CNN,” he joked.

“When all the unused ammunition comes back in to us, that’s when we know the war is really over,” said Maj. Arthur Anthony, personnel officer of the 38th. “That’s when we all get to go home.” ☺

Ceremony bids reservists farewell

Story by Curtis Krueger
St. Petersburg Times

TAMPA, Fla. – Lieutenant Michael Lamolli said goodbye to his family, but he wasn’t willing to say goodbye to his military way of life. That, he said, is why he was ready to ship out and fight against terrorism.

“The way we live is endangered because of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks,” said Lamolli, a middle school teacher from Clermont, Fla. “I’d rather take it to them before they take it to us.”

Lamolli was among more than 200 soldiers in two Tampa-based Army Reserve units that gathered for a sendoff at Legends Field, the spring training home of the New York Yankees.

With their families cheering from the stands, members of the 317th Military Police Battalion and the 810th Military Police Company marched onto the baseball field, listened to brief speeches and said their goodbyes.

Sergeant Major James Voltoline looked up from

the diamond and saw his wife, Dena, and four children holding up signs that said: “You’re our hero Daddy.” “It brings a tear to your eyes,” he said.

Many Army Reserve and National Guard units have conducted similar sendoff ceremonies in recent months, but this one came on what appeared to be almost the eve of war. The speakers included U.S. Rep. Jim Davis, D-Tampa, and Yankees pitching great Roger Clemens.

Clemens told them, “I consider myself to be a team player, but you guys, you men and women, are the ultimate team.” Star shortstop Derek Jeter also appeared and signed autographs for the soldiers.

Major General Michael R. Mayo, representing the Army Reserve’s 81st Regional Support Command, said after the national anthem played he felt like saying, “Play ball.” “But I think it’s more

appropriate for this group to use the words, ‘Let’s roll,’” Mayo added.

The soldiers said they were sad about leaving their families, but not scared of assisting in taking military action against Hussein. ☹

“I consider myself to be a team player, but you guys, you men and women, are the ultimate team.”

Roger Clemens



Photo by Stefanie Boyar, St. Petersburg Times

Sergeant Wayne Johnson, 317th MP BN, says goodbye to his three-year-old son, Ryan Johnson, after a farewell ceremony for his unit.



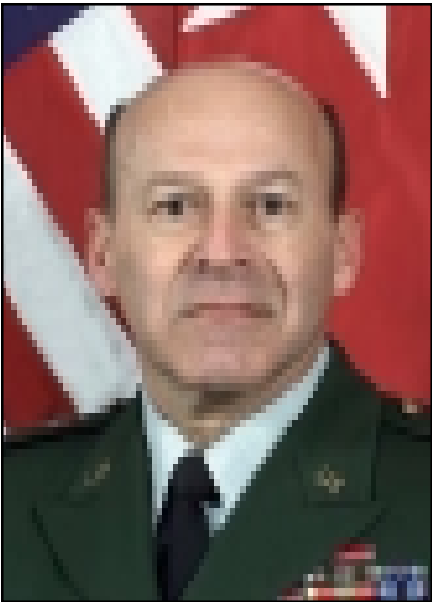
Front cover:
Lindsay Arnold, a congressional staff member, assembles a M249 Semi-Automatic Weapon during the Army Reserve Awareness Day activities at Fort Knox, Ky., this past April.
(Photo by Maj. William Nutter, 81st RSC, PAO)

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GENERAL COMMENTS



Maj. Gen. Allen D. Bell

This has been a year with many changes. The 81st has been challenged with mobilizations, deployments, demobilizations, and a re-organization, however, you have managed to perform in a manner that is a model for other RSC's and the Army Reserve.

Upon assumption of command of the 81st, I realized we would have many missions – both CONUS and OCONUS. All of these missions and the soldiers completing these missions are an important part of the Army Reserve in our support to the Active Army. For this reason I dedicate these “Commander’s Notes” to each and every soldier in the 81st RSC.

I’m proud of the 81st RSC, its

subordinate units and the many missions they have accomplished since September 11, 2001. You have mobilized over 13,000 soldiers in support of Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Today, there are over 11,000 soldiers still serving in these campaigns. The burden on the 81st was a heavy one, and you responded quickly, efficiently and completed every assigned mission with professionalism and technical competence. The Army must have the skills and resources of the Army Reserve to enjoy success. Your commitment to excellence does not go unrecognized.

I would also like to thank the families and friends of our deployed soldiers. Your families have been supportive as you

deployed to various locations to serve your country. While this has not been an easy task, they showed great enthusiasm and encouraged you to complete your mission at your highest possible level of performance. Your family members ensured that your unit’s mission would be a success by managing the daily activities of your household while you were deployed. I proudly salute your families and friends and I know they will continue to support you in the future.

As the Army transforms, so will the Army Reserve, and therefore, so will the 81st RSC. We must all embrace change and support the CAR’s direction to ensure we evolve as the Army’s foremost provider of trained and ready soldiers.

(Train-Maintain-Sustain)

CHAPLAIN’S CHAT

Chaplain Thomas Moody, one of our Reserve chaplains in Operation Iraqi Freedom, recently wrote me asking prayer for one of his soldiers who had received shrapnel wounds to the face, and was in the field hospital where Chaplain Moody is serving. We are praying for this young man and all of our soldiers and their families.

I’m exceedingly proud of the ministry our chaplains have provided overseas and here at home. Christian and Jewish troops have discovered that time of war can be a time for spiritual renewal as evidenced by the crowds who have come together to worship under the leadership of our chaplains in Kuwait and Iraq. Soldiers want to know if God is with them – no one wants to be alone in war. There are disappointments and lost dreams. One military policewoman said that she needed God’s inspiration to get through her assignment with her military police battalion.



Chaplain (Col.) Tommy W. Smith

Often soldiers realize that there are people at home who are dependent on them. The big challenge is coming home and finding ways to integrate those new experiences into day-to-day life. As we make our plans to bring soldiers back home, our task is to help families reunite and adjust to all the new changes. The chaplains of the 81st RSC have been going through special training in marriage and family issues, and will be conducting marriage enrichment retreats for soldiers and their spouses upon demobilization.

New beliefs are difficult to put into old schemes. That is why we need to remember that any type of trauma, crisis, or war, impacts individuals in different ways, but always brings changes. There are new insights and beliefs. Spouses have been separated from one another for long months. The challenge is to “come home and make a difference.”

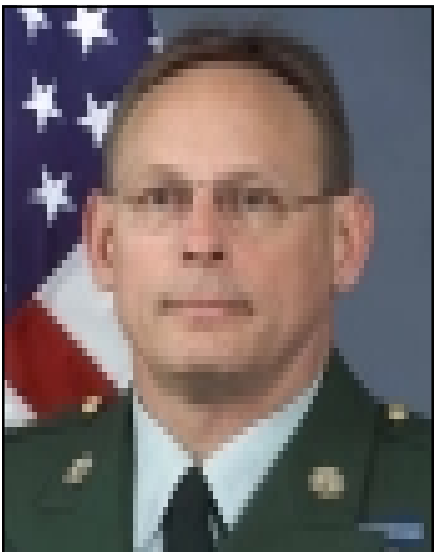
“...our task is to help families reunite and adjust to all the new changes.”

Chaplain (Col.) Tommy W. Smith

CSM MEMOS

I am very honored to have been selected as the 81st Regional Support Command, Command Sergeant Major. There are many great command sergeant majors across our Command, and to be selected from among them is very humbling.

As I visit our soldiers at the different Mobilization Stations, I’m very impressed with the hard work they’ve done to get ready for deployment. It has been a team effort that has made this possible, thanks to both, the civilian work force and the soldiers that were not mobilized. These visits, together with the opportunity to travel and see our units, serve to solidify my belief that our soldiers’ outstanding performance continues to validate our reputation as the Force of Choice. This hard-earned reputation has resulted from many years of excellent service and various deployments.



Command Sgt. Maj. Stuart Lee

The demand for our services will continue and may even grow in the future. Since the attack on our homeland on 9-11, there is even more demand for our services as we execute various worldwide missions.

We cannot rest on past accomplishments. We have several new issues facing our command, now and in the future. There will be many decisions to make concerning the direction for the 81st Regional Support Command. I’m sure that we will continue to work together to tackle those tough issues and hard decisions.

I have begun to focus on a few of these

issues. Specifically, I’m looking at non-duty MOSQ, Noncommissioned Officers Education System, Noncommissioned Officer Leadership Development Program, promotion boards, NCOERs, as well as other areas. Noncommissioned Officers will continue to play a key role in ensuring that we stay on course. Training, leading, caring for our soldiers and their families, maintaining our equipment, enforcing standards, integrating safety into everything we do and supporting our commanders will remain a top priority.

Again, I am honored to be “YOUR” 81st Regional Support Command, Command Sergeant Major. I look forward to visiting with each of our units. I’m confident that the soldiers of this command will continue to do great things and ensure that we remain the Force of Choice. HOOAH!

“I am honored to be “YOUR” 81st Regional Support Command, Command Sergeant Major.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Stuart Lee

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Operation Family Fun

Military families unite for day of fun

Story by Spc. Michelle Lunato
204th MPAD

ORLANDO, Fla. – The day was muggy-hot, but the children ran around like they only had one care in the world – having fun. They raced around obstacles, threw darts at balloons and competed in Simon Says. This wasn't just another day at a fair or an Orlando attraction. This was Operation Family Fun.

Family members of reservists deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom were invited to the Hilton Grand Vacations Company Resort on May 18, to relax and unwind. The Hilton selected reserve family members because their lives had been dramatically affected by supporting the war, said Karen Carnley, director of business management and operation for the Hilton, and originator of the idea. "I just wanted them to know that we care," said Carnley.

This kind of support to military families is vital, according to Staff Sgt. Heidi Hunter, family readiness volunteer and career counselor, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 81st Regional Support Command. "We have to appreciate the families so when the family members come back they will continue to serve."

The stress of these deployment separations strains everyone in a military family, especially young children who cannot understand why a parent is gone, said many parents. "The kids are the only ones in school

with a deployed dad," said Elaine Sawyer, wife of a 345th Military Intelligence soldier who has been deployed for 18 months. "They've had a little difficulty." However, this day brought smiles to their faces, noted Sawyer. "They are not fighting today," said Sawyer with a smile.

There was no time to fight on this steaming hot day though. The Hilton crammed in more than just carnival activities for the kids. There were movies, arts and crafts, face painting, hair wraps, airbrush tattoos, and of course, plenty of food and ice cream.

"We are trying to fill their time away from each other in a fun way," said Elena Norman, senior director of communications, Hilton, whose husband is an activated Coast Guardsman.

But just filling time wasn't enough. The Hilton also gave away fun money for participating in each activity. This sought after money was clutched in the children's little hands as they anxiously awaited an auction of prizes. Many of the children didn't really know exactly what an auction was, but they knew it meant some good prizes.

"I'm saving for the big one," said 7-year-old Seth Lucas, whose dad is a Marine who has been deployed to Iraq since January.

The day wasn't all about the kids though. Family members could sit back in the beauty of the luxury resort to watch the kids play, enjoy a free massage, record a video message to their deployed loved one, and "buy" a slew of donated packages with their fun money.

The auction was competitive as the families fought to buy gift packages that

"We want to thank each of you for the tremendous support you give your loved ones."

Antoine Dagot



Photo by Sgt. Raul A. Tirado, 204th MPAD

Stephanie Sawyer, 7, competes in an obstacle course at Operation Family Fun May 18 at the Hilton Vacation Resort in Orlando, Fla.

ranged from a membership to a fitness club, two beach towels and three tanning sessions, to a manicure, haircut and a bag of body lotions.

As the day wound down and everyone was exhausted from fun, the Hilton had one last surprise for the reserve families – a free two-night stay at any of the Hilton resorts.

This was just one way the corporation could thank the service members and their families for their service, commitment and sacrifice to America and the world, said Antoine Dagot, chief executive officer, Hilton.

"We want to thank each of you for the tremendous support you give your loved ones," said Dagot. ☺

Army advocates in-state tuition for military families

Story by Joe Burlas
Office of the Chief Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – The Georgia Board of Regents listened when the Army started informally asking all states in February to consider favorable in-state college tuition policies for soldiers and their family members.

Georgia changed its in-state tuition rules in late May to mirror the Army's desire for soldiers and their family members to have in-state tuition eligibility both in their state of legal residence and the state where the soldier is assigned, and continuity of that eligibility once established.

In addition to Georgia, there are currently 15 other states the Army considers to be soldier-friendly in meeting its in-state tuition desire, said Mike Tevnan, an education specialist at the Total Army Personnel Command. Those states include Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee and Utah.

Tevnan related the contents of an e-mail he got in the past year from a master sergeant with a legal residence of Florida, who was stationed in Texas when his child started college with in-state tuition rates there and then was assigned to a post in Georgia. The daughter

lost in-state eligibility when her father moved. When investigating her moving to a Georgia college, the sergeant learned that his daughter would not be able to transfer all the college course credits she earned in Texas.

Texas has since moved to conform its in-state eligibility rules as its legislative body has just incorporated soldier-friendly changes into a



formal bill. That bill now awaits Gov. Rick Perry's signature before becoming law.

Last November's Army Family Action Plan identified the financial hardship placed upon military families due to varying in-state college tuition rules as those families are required to move from state to state due to military reassignment as its number one issue. The delta, or difference, between average annual in-state and out-of-state tuition costs ranges from \$3,000 to more than \$17,000, according to Tevnan's research.

For example, the difference between average

in-state and out-of-state tuition in North Carolina is \$17,921.

That delta can often make the difference between a soldier being able to afford sending a family member to college or not, said Patty Shinseki, wife of Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki and host of the annual Army Family Action Plan meeting for the past four years. She said soldiers and their families shouldn't be penalized by virtue of the many moves their service to the nation often requires.

Army officials are prohibited by law from lobbying — in other words, leaders cannot call up lawmakers or their staffs and tell them what the Army wants whenever they feel like it. Army officials can, however, respond to queries from those lawmakers and staffs about what the Army is interested in and talk about the issue through established normal lines of communication between lawmakers and the Army. It can also use its civilian aides to the secretary of the Army to let legislators know military favorable in-state tuition rules are important to the Army.

Information about how each state rates with what the Army desires for in-state tuition eligibility for soldiers and family members can be found on the Army Education Homepage, www.armyeducation.army.mil, under the civilian links of its links page. ☺

New commander prepares to lead soldiers into future

Story by SSG Scott Fisk
81st RSC PAO

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – As the new commander of the 81st Regional Support Command (RSC), Major General (MG) Alan D. Bell comes into command motivated and determined to lead from the front; and with all the training and leadership skills he has under his belt, that shouldn't be a problem.

He said as the 81st RSC adapts to changing times, it's important to remember the key role readiness plays. "As the Army transforms, the Army Reserve is transforming with it. We bring tremendous value to the Active component as a force multiplier and provider of trained and ready forces."

Bell added he believes it's the dedication and determination of individual soldiers that make the biggest difference. "Major General Bell believes in having the right people in the right job. He believes everyone in an organization brings something to the table and when an organization can capitalize on its member's strengths, that organization will be successful," said 1st Lt. Dominique E. Cook, aide-de-camp, Commanding General, 81st RSC.

"Major General Bell recognizes all of us will make mistakes, but it's important to learn from them so we don't repeat them. He has a gift of bringing me back into focus on the big picture," said 1st Lt. Alicia Rackston, executive officer, Headquarters, 81st RSC, Birmingham, Ala. "He is extremely passionate about having his

subordinates enroll in the appropriate professional military education (PME) courses to enhance their career development and professional growth. He believes in immediate positive rewards for soldiers who exceed the standard."

One particular aspect of readiness

aide began at the 81st RSC, I've increased the amount of running to a little over three mile. I'm totally pumped about PT which is not usual for me," said Cook.

Bell believes as leaders we must set standards. One of these standards is maintaining the appropriate level of



Photo by Paul Adams, 81st RSC PAO

General Alan D. Bell (holding flag) receives the 81st Regional Support Command guidon during the change of command ceremony.

training that Bell strongly believes in is physical fitness. "Probably the biggest way he's inspired me is through my physical fitness. He never discourages me if I don't run as fast as the next person. Instead, he focuses on the fact that I ran better than I did the last time. Since my tenure as an

physical fitness. "Soldiers should be able to look at their leaders and the leaders must look the part. They should say to themselves, 'I will follow you because you look like a leader.' If we expect our soldiers to follow our lead we must stay physically fit."

When it comes to leadership, that's

something many might say Bell knows a lot about. For example, while visiting one of his units in Kinston, N.C., Bell played a major role in helping to save employees of a pharmaceutical plant located next to the unit's Reserve center. The plant exploded due to equipment failure. Bell, along with other soldiers from the Reserve center, placed their lives in danger to help the civilians in the burning building get out to safety.

Many believe Bell leads by example. "There is no mission he's not willing to take and no mission he did not complete. What most inspires me is that in times when most people would quit, Major General Bell just keeps on going," said Staff Sgt. Willie L. Pollock of the 1st Brigade, 87th Division (TS), who worked with Bell while serving as his administration Sergeant.

Honor might be the driving force behind Bell's success, but family is what keeps him grounded. As a family oriented man with his wife Diane; two sons, Josh and Jacob; and two daughters, Katlyn and Amy, Bell feels strongly that soldiers should stay in touch with their family members as much as possible during mobilizations. "I encourage all deployed soldiers to maintain a close relationship with their family, especially their children. Take the time to talk with the children. Ask the child about his or her day and tell them about your day. Your children will see how your mobilization is important to the mission of the U.S. Army," Bell said. 🐾

Military Police protect, defend

Story by Sgt. Frank N. Pellegrini
USAR PAO

CAMP BUCCA, Iraq — When the 724th Military Police Battalion arrived at the coalition's temporary holding facility here, a plan was already in place for the nearby semi-permanent facility they'd be guarding – complete with electricity, plumbing, more space and better tents. The only problem was, it hadn't been built yet. This found 18 soldiers assigned to guard the new facility working to lay down the very concertina-wire fence line they would soon be patrolling.

Specialist Jose Lopez cheerfully grumbled, "You know the joke about what MP stands for – 'multi-purpose.' You name it, we do it. We're out here pulling shifts in the towers and along the perimeter, waiting for this camp to be done so we can start doing what we came here to do, and now they want us to build the thing ourselves."

Lopez, a deputy sheriff for Broward County, Fla., said he was exaggerating a bit. Engineer units with heavy equipment would take care of the major construction, but it was up to his squad to get the work started. Besides – as these two Fort Lauderdale-based Army Reservists prepared to finally get down to the business of guarding enemy prisoners of war (EPW), their sergeant considered a little construction work to be healthy for morale.

"I've got 18 soldiers under me who are going to be responsible for watching as many as 1,500 EPWs themselves. Guarding EPWs is difficult, pressurized work. These guys have been waiting for this for

two months, from home to Kuwait and finally to here. I think a little manual labor like this helps burn off some stress and gets them ready to go,"

said Sgt. 1st Class Alfonzie Brown, of Moorehaven, Fla.

Specialist Yolanda Isaac, a physical therapist in Fort Lauderdale added, "We've been trained for this, and there are lots of prisoners over in the temporary facility, but you never know what it's really going to be like until you're the one dealing with them everyday. Will they make it harder for me because I'm a woman? That'll probably be the biggest challenge, dealing with that, but I'm just going to do what I have to do to do my job, which is to protect them and protect myself. I won't be mean to them, but I won't let them be mean to me either," she added.

"Most of them are pretty compliant," said Lt. Col. Lee Coulter, the 724th's commander at the camp. "They realize they're protected here – they'll get food, water, medical care, even cigarettes. They know they won't

be here forever, and when you think of how most people in Iraq have been living – well, we have civilians trying to come here, saying they're soldiers, trying to get in."

Some of the civilians might try this, but not all – after all, a prisoner is still a prisoner. Lopez has already found out first-hand that some EPWs, whether out of fear, confusion or simple enmity, will always prefer to make a run for it.

"We caught four of them escaping from the British one night," he recalled. "We were pulling security for some engineers working out here the other night when we saw four shadows on the berm. They ran, and tried to

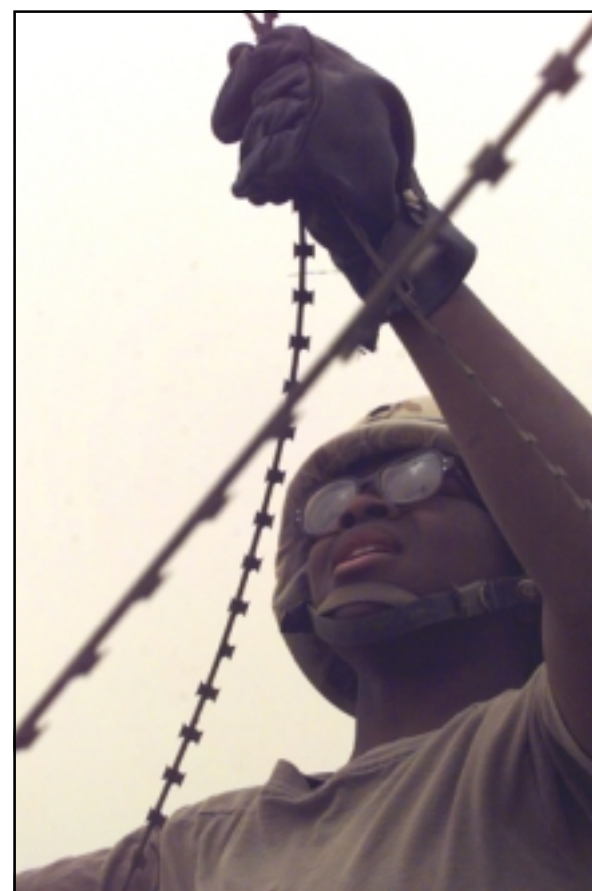


Photo by Sgt. Frank Pellegrini

Specalist Yolanda Isaac, 724th MP BN, strings some concertina wire over a picket at Camp Bucca in Southern Iraq.

hide behind some of these little bushes. It didn't do them much good."

For Brown, everything about this mission – from the scorpions, to the sandstorms, to the fence-building in the hot desert sun – is an experience to be cherished.

"I've been in the military 27 years, and this is the first time I've been deployed," said Brown. "I'm thrilled. This is history in the making. Everything I see, everything that's happening, will be in a history book someday." 🐾

Army Reservists guard captured Iraqi Air Base

Story by Sgt. Frank N. Pellegrini
USAR PAO

TALLIL AIR BASE, Iraq – Less than three weeks ago, this small airfield was the site of a thundering tank and artillery battle between Iraqi loyalists and the U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Division forces, which was determined to grab what was one of the coalition's first strategic objectives of the war.

P.O.W

Now, a cardboard sign taped to the gate reads "Bush International Airport." The only Iraqis here are enemy prisoners of war gathered inside, for whom the airport means a 12 to 72-hour layover on the way south to Umm Qasr and the coalition's internment facility there. The only proof left that Saddam's forces were ever in the airfield's crumbling and only existing building is in a room upstairs, where tattered cutouts of soccer stars dangle from the walls.

TALLIL AIR BASE

Of all the airports in the world, it may be said that Tallil certainly isn't the most comfortable one to be stationed in. Broken windows, disemboweled ceilings and bullet-riddled walls bear some witness to the fierce fighting that took place here – although it's difficult to tell how much of the disrepair long predates this conflict and how much merely reflects the prewar state of Iraqi maintenance.

"Look at this place," said Sgt. Emiliano Carrero of the 320th

Military Police Company, one the Army Reservists out of St. Petersburg, Fla., charged with guarding the base. "It's hard to believe anybody would fight for this dump."

But in war, as in real estate, location is everything, and Tallil sits at a perfect halfway point between Baghdad and the Iraq-Kuwait border. It's an ideal way station for enemy prisoners of war gathered from points north and a bustling supply connection to Kuwait for U.S. forces in all directions. With the constant arrivals and departures of cargo planes, and troop and supply toting Blackhawk and Chinook helicopters, the dusty runways and dirt roads of Tallil are still proving their strategic worth.

HEAD COUNT

"We do accountability for the prisoners more than anything else," said Lt. Matt Garcia, the unit's executive officer. "Just counting heads, making sure everybody goes south that's supposed to. We've got some military intelligence guys upstairs in case anyone important comes through, and we help out when the planes and helicopters stop here to refuel or unload; but war-wise, yeah, it's been pretty quiet."

"There was a firefight about a mile beyond the perimeter, just the other night," Garcia added. "A few Iraqis decided to ambush some Marines who happened to be coming in from up north with a load of prisoners." He



Photo by Sgt. Frank N. Pellegrini

A guard with the 320th Military Police Company mans a makeshift outpost at Tallil Air Base in central Iraq.

laughed, and pointed to some rusty pickup trucks parked in front. "The Marines captured them, and brought the guys here in their own vehicles."

DUTY

Lieutenant Judy Hall, 3rd platoon leader for the 320th, is looking at the bright side. "Would I rather be at home with my daughter? Sure, but

my country called," Hall said. "This unit needed a lieutenant, and I'm here to do whatever they need," she added.

"Besides, we've got four walls and a roof – in places – and water to drink and food to eat." Hall looked around, and laughed. "Now if they'd only give me a mop, I could do wonders with this place." 🐾

3rd PERSCOM delivers at Arifjan mail facility

Story by Staff Sgt. Nate Orme
3rd PERSCOM PAO

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait – While combat units continue to battle sporadic enemy elements in and around Baghdad, 3rd Personnel Command (PERSCOM) soldiers battle to stay ahead of a monumental flow of mail in and out of Camp Arifjan.

The work is all part of an elaborate mail distribution system set up to deliver from seven to 11 chartered 747 cargo planes filled with mail weekly to soldiers deployed for Operation Enduring Freedom to liberate Iraq.

The Camp Arifjan Army Post Office (APO) currently provides mail services for more than 17,000 soldiers, which amounts to 30-40,000 pounds of mail daily. That's about two to three loaded 40-foot trucks, said Capt. Treva West, 755th Adjutant General Postal Detachment commander. The 755th, an Army Reserve unit from Texarkana, Texas, is one of several 3rd PERSCOM "down-trace," or subunits, operating in the facility.

After having helped reduce a 600,000 pound backlog of mail in the United States destined to the Middle East military theater, Camp Arifjan's

APO continues to process a large volume of mail. This has amounted to as high as 70,000 pounds a day. In addition to mail from the United States arriving via plane, mail comes into the APO by DHL-Direct truck delivery from Bahrain, and via other APOs in intra-theater transit, said West.

The high volume of mail churning through the APO is due to Camp Arifjan becoming a transition point during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom for thousands of soldiers far beyond the assigned capacity of 3,000.

"People should understand how hard these soldiers work."

Capt. Treva West

"People should understand how hard these soldiers work. Seeing the mounds of mail, you would think it was an insurmountable task," said West, "but we get it done everyday."

Working in two shifts, 28 soldiers from the 755th have been augmented by about 30 soldiers from 3rd PERSCOM and by several mail clerks from the 800th Military Police Battalion of Uniondale, N.Y., working in two shifts. Soldiers assigned to unload and sort mail into large canvas bins for unit pickup are given a 30-minute briefing. Others may be given a mail clerk class, given every Wednesday. Upon completion they can carry a Military Postal Clerk card and



Photo by Staff Sgt. Nate Orme

Sergeant Joe Washington of the 755th Adjutant General Postal Detachment attends a customer at the Arifjan Post Office.

will understand how to properly receive, secure and distribute mail for their home unit.

With the high flow of soldiers in and out of Camp Arifjan, West says it's important that units leave a forwarding address to expedite the flow of mail. "Whether the unit is moving north to Iraq or redeploying to the states, units should fill out a change of address card. Also, to cutdown on the amount of 'locator' mail, soldiers should let family members know their new address."

Locator mail, or mail sent to units that have since moved, can still be routed to

its proper destination using a computer locator database.

The locator database was designed in-house by the 755th's own Capt. Jeffery Clements, a computer programmer in his civilian occupation. The software is updated when units move, requiring a new routing scheme for mail to reach them.

Mail also has a strong influence on troop morale. "Soldiers need their mail," said Specialist Steven Speisegger of the 3rd PERSCOM, adding, "It's important for morale to know their families are still thinking about them. That to me makes it all worth while." 🐾

Army Reserve Awareness Day

Story /Photos by Maj. William Nutter
81st RSC PAO

FORT KNOX, Ky. - There is an old saying that a soldier will do more in the first four hours of the day than others will do all day. Some congressional staffers learned this first hand as they: rose at 5:30 a.m., had breakfast at 6:50 a.m., performed Close Combat Tactical Training at 7:45 a.m. and fired the M-249 Semi-Automatic Weapon at 9:30 a.m.

ARAD

The 100th Training Division, located in Louisville, Ky., supported by the 81st Regional Support Command from Birmingham, Ala., hosted the Second Annual Army Reserve Awareness Day (ARAD) in April at Fort Knox, Ky. The event was established to help expose congressional staff members to Army Reserve soldiers and to give them some insight on the Army Reserve's mission through a condensed schedule of training events and opportunities to view various Army displays.

Their guests included 27 congressional staff members from 13 states and U.S. Army Reserve Ambassadors. The ambassadors and 100th Division drill sergeants served as escorts for the staff members.

"These young staffers read all the reports and briefings on the hill, but it's not real; it's on paper; it's not hands on, and they are now seeing how soldiers train," said Lt. Col. Andy Grimes, 100th Division's assistant project officer for ARAD. Grimes said the goal was to get the staffers hot, dirty and sweaty so they could truly feel the experience of being a reserve soldier.

SOLDIER TRAINING

Experiencing the dirt and grime was not hard said Lindsay Arnold, who works for U.S. Senator Gordon Smith who represents Oregon. She participated in the obstacle course where she fell flat on her back in the dirt while climbing a net. It knocked her out of breath momentarily, but she said she now knows first hand the reality of soldier training.

"I have learned leaps and bounds about the military. I know that about 50 percent of our nation's military is in the Reserve," said Arnold. She also said she now understands the difference between the Reserve and the Guard. "The first thing I'm taking back with me is my experience meeting the enlisted folks." Arnold thought the professionalism of the enlisted soldiers stood out.

EYE OPENER

As an enlisted Army Reservist, Staff Sgt. Sandra Wright, a 100th



A congressional staff member experiences the reality of wearing a Nuclear, Biological and Chemical (NBC) mask during Army Reserve Awareness Day activities at the 100th Division Headquarters, Louisville, Ky.

Division drill sergeant, who escorted the staffers, thought the concept of ARAD was not only good for the congressional staff members, but also good for the soldiers as well. "I've learned as much as they did. It opened my eyes to what they do at their level," Wright said. "It's also an eye opener to them on the logistical side - letting them know we're not just shooting and wasting bullets, but those bullets need to come from somewhere."

ENTERTAINMENT

Shooting bullets wasn't the only event. Units from the 81st RSC, provided a variety of static displays - everything from chemical protective garments, to engineers with their dump truck. The grand finale of the day included a flight over in a CH-47 Chinook aircraft from Fort Knox to Louisville, Ky., to visit the 100th Division's military museum. The night ended with the viewing of "Thunder Over Louisville," a fireworks display held over the Ohio River.

TEAM WORK

"Today they understand the Army Reserve," said Jim Fallin, a U.S. Army Reserve Ambassador from Kentucky. Fallin believes there is a common bond between the soldiers and the staffers. "Both of these groups, in my humble opinion, represent what is good about America. All of them, the staffers and the members of the Army Reserve, could possibly make more money doing something else, but they are serving our Country and trying to make a difference, and together, I'm sure they can," Fallin said. 🇺🇸



Congressional staff members and Army Reservists are stretched out by Army Reserve Drill Sergeants from the 100th Division as they prepare for the Fort Knox obstacle course during Army Reserve Awareness Day.



A congressional staff member sets his sight on his target as Staff Sgt. Jerry Payne, 100th Division, provides guidance on firing the M-249 Semi-Automatic Weapon.



Two congressional staff members compete as they climb the ropes to meet one of the many obstacle challenges at the obstacle course located at Fort Knox.



A congressional staff member prepares to take on the mountain wall climb at Fort Knox, Ky.

Soldiers put lives in danger to save civilian lives

Story by SSG Derrick Witherspoon
81st RSC PAO

KINSTON, N.C. – As bright, red flames rose and thick, black smoke billowed from the burning building, people ran for their lives, never expecting that some nearby Army Reservists they hardly knew would come to their rescue – just in the nick of time.

Army Reservists from the 362nd Quartermaster Battalion, located in Kinston, N.C., helped save the lives of some West Pharmaceutical Services employees after a deadly explosion that occurred in February. Although the soldiers were preparing to mobilize in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, they automatically knew that their first priority was helping the people in the burning building approximately 200 meters away from their Army Reserve center.

“It was like a bomb had went off right outside our building,” said Sgt. 1st Class Edward P. Drew, a member of the 362nd QM BN. “The concussion from the explosion was so bad it bowed in our overhead doors, drop ceilings came down, and it blew me out of the drill hall and back into the corridor where I was coming from.”

Drew said at first they thought it was a terrorist attack on their Reserve center. “We thought an airplane had hit the building. Then we looked outside and saw the black cloud of smoke with debris in it coming from the building next to us,” said Drew. “Just so happened, we had the commanding general of the 81st RSC (Maj. Gen. Alan D. Bell) in the building at the time giving us our readiness inspection. CW2 (Terry) Simpson and myself grabbed the lifesaver bags and the general and a few other people ran out of the building to get over there to see if they could help out.”

Drew said as they approached the burning building, employees were stumbling out with cuts and bruises and they appeared to be in disarray. The soldiers jumped into action under the direction of Maj. Gen. Bell. They did everything from helping people with minor cuts and bruises to going in the burning building and digging people out of debris that had them trapped. The soldiers also constructed a small triage area for anyone who might have gotten injured. Drew added that they assembled some cots and handed out blankets. They also constructed a makeshift morgue out of a military tent.

Drew said although they knew what they were doing



Photo by Donna Werner, The Free Press, Kinston, N.C.

Thick, black smoke billows from the West Pharmaceuticals Plant after a devastating explosion caused the building to catch on fire.

could have been dangerous, their instincts drove them to help anyway. “My biggest fear was going into the building and finding body parts and people mangled up really bad. I don’t know how I would’ve reacted to



Photo by SSG Derrick Witherspoon

Sergeant first Class Edward P. Drew (left), stands next to Emma J. Waters and Charles G. Daniels, two of West Pharmaceutical Services Kinston plant employees.

that. It would’ve been devastating. Thankfully, that wasn’t the case. All the soldiers in the unit that helped did a great job and really need to be commended,” said Drew.

“We just hope the Army Reservists know how much we appreciate them being there for us that day. They

did a very good job,” said Emma J. Waters, a quality assurance specialist for West Pharmaceutical Services.

Don Morel, chairman, chief executive officer of West Pharmaceutical Services, said the company is extremely grateful that the reservists were close by when the accident occurred. “They played a pivotal role in getting many of the employees out of the building and caring for those that were injured in the immediate aftermath,” said Morel. “We as a company would like to express our collective gratitude to the soldiers. A lot of us know what those guys go through on a day-to-day basis and we are grateful that they are there.”

West Pharmaceutical Services recently invited Drew to visit their Headquarters in Lionville, Pa., where they presented him with a letter for the unit that recognized all the soldiers for their heroic efforts in the unfortunate disaster at their Kinston, N.C., plant. They also plan to make a donation to a foundation in the unit’s name.

Drew said he doesn’t consider what they did heroic, just humane.

Although West Pharmaceuticals lost four employees in the explosion that day, thanks to the Army Reservists and local emergency response teams many more lives were saved. Morel said they are now in the process of finding a way to continue their operations in Kinston, N.C. 🐾

Military doctors spread tender loving care, first aid

Story by Staff Sgt. Christina Bhatti
11th PAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan — The original Hippocratic Oath was written in 400 B.C. by Hippocrates, and has been changed and modified over the years, but it’s underlying principle remains the same — caring for the sick to the best of the doctors’ ability and remembering “that there is art to medicine as well as science, and that warmth, sympathy, and understanding may outweigh the surgeon’s knife or the chemist’s drug.”

This warmth, sympathy and understanding is what brought together the doctors from the 946th Medical Team (Forward Surgical) from Mobile, Ala., and the Italians from Forward Operating Base Salerno to visit a nearby orphanage in the town of Khost. They went to comfort and care for the children there.

The orphanage sits on the outskirts of Khost and houses approximately 50 children, with more who attended

school there during the day. The building was too small to house all of the children who need it, but the teachers and administration do everything they can to make sure the children have school and some food.

When the doctors arrived, they were greeted with thumbs up and smiles. They made “rounds” to all of the classrooms giving the children some attention and sweets.

When it was time to see patients, the long line of children patiently waited their turn to be seen.

“Most of these children have never seen a doctor.”

Major Eric Romanucci

“Most of these children have never seen a doctor,” said Maj. Eric Romanucci, commander, 946 FST. Of the children seen, most have common ailments that can be treated with over-the-counter drugs in the States, he said.

According to Romanucci, most of the children complained of dizziness, which is associated with anemia due to the lack of a proper diet. “Most of these children have no shoes, and walk through garbage in the streets. It



Photo by Staff Sgt. Christina Bhatti

Major Erick Romanucci (right) and Capt. Ferderco Lulardo (center) exam a child at an orphanage located on the outskirts of Afghanistan.

makes it easy for worms to get into their systems, but with no medical care, it makes it hard for them to get treated,” he said.

The doctors gave out medication ranging from daily vitamins to anti-parasite drugs.

“Our goal is to care for them and make sure that they get at least some of the things they need,” said Italian

Capt. Ferderco Lulardo, 9th Alpini Regiment, Naopli, Italy.

“These visits give us a chance to get out into the community,” Romanucci said. “We get to meet the people, and they get to see us and realize that there is no truth behind the bad stories that have inundated them for so long. They get to see that westerners are good people.” 🐾

Reservist brings El Salvadoran woman answer to prayer

Story by SSG Derrick Witherspoon

81st RSC PAO

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador – Anita Marroquin prayed for over 10 years for a miracle from God, but for it to come to her through way of a camouflaged angel was not quite what she expected; but more than she could ever ask for.

Marroquin, an El Salvadoran woman who lives in the city of Berlin, El Salvador, received a life-changing gift in January from Capt. Conrad G. Hawkins, an Army Reserve physical therapist; but how these two individuals came to meet is quite a - as Marroquin placed it - miracle indeed.

In February of 2002, Hawkins, who was a member of the 330th Combat Support Hospital, located in Millington, Tenn., was participating in New Horizons 2002, a humanitarian and civic action exercise that takes place once a year in various countries within Central and South America. A portion of the particular exercise Hawkins was involved in took place near a small city named Berlin. While there, Hawkins and his unit were performing a level one medical mission.

“On one of the days we were providing this medical assistance near the city of Berlin, we were visited by one of the local women who was determined to speak to one of us about a problem she had, in hopes that we could help her with it,” Hawkins said.

That day Marroquin presented Hawkins’s unit commander, Col. Howard Bromley, with a letter asking him if they could help her in obtaining a new prosthetic arm for herself. Hawkins said Bromley realized that this was not part of their level one medical mission, but he told Marroquin that he would see what he could do.

“My commander later came to me - considering I was the only physical therapist in the unit - and asked me if this request was possible and something I could make happen. I told him I believed I could make it happen because I have some contacts back in the states that deal primarily with prostheses,” Hawkins said. “So the next day we got in contact with Miss Marroquin and when she came back to us I took some basic measurements of her left arm.

Hawkins said during the measuring process, he realized he didn’t have all the materials he needed to do the job correctly. “We really needed to make a Plaster of Paris casting of her right shoulder. What her problem was is that her arm, all the way up to her scapula (shoulder), was amputated due to a motor vehicle accident that occurred during the El Salvador Civil War.”

One day Marroquin, along with a friend, was chased in her car by some guerrilla soldiers and while she was trying to escape, they shot at her vehicle causing her to crash. She was severely hurt, and left for dead, and the person in the vehicle with her was killed when the car crashed. Her right arm was so badly mangled that it had to be amputated up to her shoulder blade. She also sustained other injuries that caused serious nerve damage in her left arm, leaving her with less than 30 percent of capability in it.

“The prosthetic arm that she was given after the accident weighed close to 80 pounds, and for a woman who weighs about 140, and is not very tall, that’s a really heavy arm,” Hawkins said.

Hawkins said the new arm is very lightweight. “It weighs only about 1.5 pounds. The hand is very life like. It also has a passive range of motion, hand and elbow. There is a lock in the elbow that will allow her to position the arm in various positions, so that to the casual observer, she will look like a whole person again, something that was very important to her,” Hawkins said.

He added that after he took the measurements of Marroquin’s left arm and returned to the United States, he talked to several companies that he thought might be able to help him. He finally got in contact with Ted Snell, manager of CFI, Inc., a company that produces and manufactures prostheses.

“Mr. Snell initially said he would go ahead and produce the arm free of charge, but I had to get a Plaster



Photo by SSG Derrick Witherspoon

Army Reserve Captain Conrad G. Hawkins shows Anita Marroquin (left) her new prosthetic arm. Hawkins and the Army Reserve unit he was assigned to, the 330th Combat Support Hospital, raised money to get the arm for Marroquin.

of Paris casting of the shoulder, which I pretty much knew we had to do. I tried to go back to El Salvador to do this, but I was unable to make the trip again. Luckily, I found out about a friend of mine, Lt. Col. Joe Hunt, who has the material to make a plaster casting and was going to provide medical support during the last rotation of the New Horizons 2002 exercise,” Hawkins said. “After explaining Miss Marroquin’s situation to him, he agreed to make the plaster casting while he was down there.”

Hawkins said he picked the casting up from Hunt at the airport once he returned and he gave it, along with

offer to provide funds to flip the bill. They asked for \$500 to pay for the parts and the labor would be on them, so I went back to my unit and asked them if they would like to donate to this project,” Hawkins said.

The unit’s response to Hawkins’s request was overwhelming. They raised almost \$600 to pay for the parts needed to build the arm. “Finally in November of 2002 I was able to get the prosthetic arm and once the Army Reserve found out about it they offered to send me back to El Salvador to fit the arm on her and to help her through any of the problems she might have with it,” Hawkins said.

When Hawkins finally arrived back in Berlin, El Salvador, and reunited with Marroquin it was evident that these two people were brought together for a reason. “I always had faith that one day this would happen,” Marroquin said.

Marroquin said after 10 years God had finally answered her prayers to receive an American prosthetic arm that was lightweight and that she could wear, as oppose to the older and much heavier fashion.

“This arm will really help me, especially with my job. I work at a post office and I have to write a lot, so to be able to have something to keep the papers from moving and to keep myself propped up will be a big help. This is truly something that is going to make my life better,” Marroquin said. “I can’t thank the captain enough for all that he has done for me. He’s like a miracle; a camouflaged miracle, but a miracle indeed. God bless him,” Marroquin added with a slight laugh.

Hawkins, who works as a physical therapist in the Tipton, Tenn., Baptist Hospital, is use to helping people on a daily basis, but helping Marroquin was quite significant to him for many reasons.

“When I gave my word to Miss Marroquin that I would do this for her, I meant it. It’s a good thing to be able to give. America is a rich country and we can afford to do these medical missions, and it’s important to continue to do this,” Hawkins said.

Hawkins and Marroquin plan to stay in contact with one another through way of e-mails. Although Marroquin speaks and reads only Spanish, she has an American friend in Berlin, Meredith Bruns, who plans to help her read Hawkins’s e-mails. Hawkins said one of his future goals is to work on getting funding to create a nonprofit organization that will provide other people like Marroquin with free prostheses; and with his determination, it’s evident that this camouflage angel will make many more miracles happen. ☺



Photo by SSG Derrick Witherspoon

Captain Conrad G. Hawkins, 330th CSH, places Anita Marroquin's new prosthetic arm on her to see how it fits properly.

the arm measurements, to CFI, Inc. During the course of the next six months, he said it was getting increasingly difficult to get the company to produce the arm.

“Mr. Snell said they had gotten hit with a bunch of humanitarian projects and they couldn’t afford to flip the bill for the arm parts, so finally in August of 2002 I contacted them and again reiterated my

MAKERS

Employees of the Year

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – Thomas P. Boyle, Jr., a civilian employee of the 81st Regional Support Command (RSC), located in Birmingham, Ala., recently received the Supervisor of the Year and the Mr. Robert Windle Employee of the Year awards for fiscal year 2002. Boyle is currently the supervisory staff administrator for the 787th Support Battalion located in Dothan, Ala.



Thomas P. Boyle, Jr.

“My sincerest congratulations to all those nominated in each category as you all represent some 1,100 employees throughout the 81st RSC and to me it is an honor in itself just to have been nominated,” Boyle said.

“I accept these awards on behalf of all the civilians and soldiers that have been entrusted to me over the years on a day to day basis and those I have called upon for their guidance while performing my duties,” he added.

Others receiving awards were: R. B. Ladner, Jr., AMSA 144G, Greenwood, Miss., who received the Maintenance Technician of the Year Award; Sandra Webb, 3397th Garrison Support Unit, Chattanooga, Tenn., who received the Unit Technician of the Year Award; and Joel L. Sketers, 81st RSC, Birmingham, Ala., who received the Staff Technician of the Year Award.

Each of these employees were formerly recognized at the 81st RSC Commander’s Conference in January where they were presented the Superior Civilian Service Medal and a check for \$1,000.

(Story by SSG Derrick Witherspoon, 81st RSC PAO)

Leadership Award

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – Captain William D. Hoyt, an Army Reservist from Huntsville, Ala., received the prestigious 2002 General Douglas MacArthur

Leadership Award for demonstrating exceptional leadership.

The MacArthur Leadership Award, an Army award, is given annually to 13 Active Army, seven Army National Guard, and seven Army Reserve Officers who exhibit extraordinary leadership abilities and embody the ideals embraced by MacArthur.

Criteria for the award include the ability to motivate others, understand fellow soldiers and inspire commitment, teamwork and esprit de corps. All recipients of the award received a 15 pound bronze bust of MacArthur from Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, The Chief of Staff of the Army.

Hoyt is the commander of the 414th Chemical Company, based out of Orangeburg, S.C. The 414th Chemical Company falls under the 81st Regional Support Command located in Birmingham, Ala.

Hoyt’s unit is on active duty at Fort Stewart, Ga., in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Hoyt made a special trip from his duty station to receive the award May 8 in Washington, D.C.

(Story by Maj. William Nutter, 81st RSC PAO)

Secretary of Army farewell

WASHINGTON -- It has been my distinct privilege to serve as your secretary these last two years; the absolute high point of my professional life.

Our soldiers and civilian employees have distinguished themselves in peace and war befitting our heritage and reputation of service to the nation since before its founding. I could not be prouder of the outstanding contributions you have made to our nation’s defense and the honorable manner in which you have shouldered the immense sacrifices required of you and your families.

The Army remains at War and transforming. We have significant challenges ahead. We will win the War on Terrorism as part of a Joint team regardless of duration and difficulty. Additionally,



Secretary Tom White

it is absolutely vital that we build on our successes and sustain our momentum to realize the vision of Army Transformation as part of the Joint Force.

America’s Army turns 228 years old next month. Our enduring commitment to our fellow citizens is to be ready to defend the United States and her allies when called. As I conclude my duty with you I am proud to report to the American people that their respect and admiration for their Army is well founded. God Bless you, the United States Army and the United States of America.

(Secretary Tom White, 18th Army Secretary)

Reservists help save life

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – Colonel Donald G. Salo, Jr., commander, 701st Military Police Group (CID), hosted an award ceremony to honor three criminal investigation agents and to give an overview of their actions in administering Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) to an older gentleman who collapsed in the gym they were performing physical fitness training in this past December.

Sergeant First Class William Fleischer, Chief Warrant Officer Craig Sorrell, and Sgt. 1st Class Larry Congleton were conducting physical training at a Bally’s Gym in Alexandria, Va., when someone told them that an older gentleman working-out in the gym had apparently collapsed while exercising and injured his head. The soldiers jumped into action performing CPR on the man until emergency personnel arrived. Due to the soldiers’ swift actions, the man’s life was saved.

Major General Donald J. Ryder, CID commander, attended the Jan. 24 ceremony, and stated how each soldier acted above and beyond what many would have considered doing for their fellow human being.

Following Ryder’s comments, the three reservists were presented the Army Commendation Medal for “exceptionally meritorious service while rendering first aid to an injured civilian.” The award certificate stated how their selfless service and ability to react under pressure led to the successful performance of CPR that “ultimately saved the victim’s life.”

All three agents are with the 378th Military Police Detachment located in Louisville, Ky.

(Story by Capt. Thomas A. Denzler, PSU Commander)

SMA visits 81st RSC

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. - Sergeant Major of the Army, Army Sgt. Maj. Jack L. Tilley (center), talks to Maj. Mark Crumpton (left) and Sgt. Curtis Carpenter (right) during a recent visit to the 81st Regional Support Command. Tilley paid a visit to some Army Reservists, Army National Guardsmen and local policemen at the Armed Forces Reserve Center located in Birmingham, Ala. Tilley stopped by to pay a visit to the 81st RSC and the 87th Training Support Division, also located in Birmingham, Ala., to thank the reservists for their hard work in support of the various military operations taking place to combat terrorism around the world, such as Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Noble Eagle. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon, 81st RSC PAO)



ROUNDUP

81st RSG

1184th USA TTB

MOBILE, Ala. – The 1184th Army Reserve Transportation Terminal Battalion, which became well-known among coalition forces in Kuwait for staging a Mobile-style Mardi Gras parade, returned home May 30.

Hundreds of family members and friends, waving American flags and “Welcome Home” signs, cheered wildly when two buses loaded with 60 or more soldiers with the 1184th came into sight at their “home” in Mobile’s Brookley Complex.

Many in the crowd had waited hours for the arrival, as the buses made the last leg of a 7,200-mile journey from Kuwait. The unit had been deployed for about seven months.

Colonel Janet Cobb of Fairhope, the commanding officer of the 1184th, was handed a dozen yellow roses by her brother, Bill Cobb of Eight Mile, as she was the first person off the lead bus.

“We’re thrilled to be home,” she said, after being greeted by her brother and other family members and friends.

“This unit has won accolades all the way to the halls of Congress,” she said, adding that the 1184th moved a record amount of cargo through a Kuwaiti port.

“We unloaded 105 ships and 90,000 pieces of equipment,” Cobb noted. She said the unit supervised the unloading of military cargo for the 101st Airborne Division, the 82nd Airborne Division, V Army Corps and the 3rd and 4th Infantry Divisions.

(Story by George Werneth, Mobile Register)

812th Transportation Battalion

FORT STEWART, Ga. - Although the fighting has slowed in Iraq, thousands of soldiers who left U.S. soil from this southern Georgia fort remain in the Persian Gulf and will likely be there for months.

While they are there, 300 members of a South Florida Army Reserve detachment, the 3220th Garrison Support Unit, are helping run one of the busiest Army posts in the country, often doing jobs substantially different from the ones they left back home.

As other Army Reserve and National Guard units are activated to replace those now in service overseas, many of them will be processed at Fort Stewart by the 3220th GSU.

The 3220th was activated in late December for a yearlong assignment.

The South Florida soldiers said they are content with their work. “Some people say we are in the rear, not on the front lines – as if people behind the lines are less important,” said Sgt. Daniel Sanon, of the 3220th GSU.

“When you see the smile on their face when we straighten out their problems and get them what they are entitled to get, it’s a good feeling,” he said.

(Story by Phil Long, Miami Herald)

640th ASG

7236th Medical Support Command

TUPELO, Miss. – Josh Rupert’s last few days have been “hectic” and his nights have been “sleepless.”

“I’ve done a lot of packing, unpacking and repacking,” said Rupert, 22. “I’ve boxed up my life and put it in a storage shed.”

Since Rupert and 184 other soldiers in the Army Reserve’s 658th Quartermaster Company were called into active duty, the Tupelo resident has been forced to withdraw from his classes at Mississippi State University, get out of his apartment lease in Starkville, turn off his utilities there and balance countless other tasks.

“Wherever Josh has gone or called to take care of these things, they’ve been very helpful and supportive,” said Dan Rupert, Josh’s father, a retired Air Force chaplain. “His apartment complex in Starkville even sent him a letter telling him how proud of him they were.”

Stories like the Ruperts’ were plentiful on Tuesday, as families gathered at Tupelo’s Army Reserve Center to send their troops off.

Their final destination is not known, but the troops will manage a general supply facility for Army troops “in a theater of operation.”

“It’s like Wal-Mart and how they operate their distribution centers,” said Brig. Gen. Thomas Bryson. “They will be the warehouse men and women. They’ll make sure the Army operates.

Bryson said the 658th company was called upon, not on a subjective basis, but because it was an “elite” unit that always scored highly on its unit measurements.

(Story by Jeremy Hudson, Mississippi Daily Journal)

642nd ASG

4212th USA Hospital

KINGSPORT, Tenn. - It will be months before Staff Sgt. Dana Lyon knows if hours of preparation for a Department of Army inspection of his Reserve unit pays off - months that the unit may remain on alert status for Operation Noble Eagle, or months it may be serving on active duty if called up.

But just getting to the evaluation - the third leg of a competition for the Chief of Staff of Army Supply Excellence Award that the Army Reserve 4212th U.S. Army Hospital is vying for - proves the unit is ready to serve.

“This is really quite an accomplishment for the unit,” said John Murphy, a civilian Army employee and program manager for the competition.

Based in Kingsport, the unit was formerly designated as the 912th MASH unit, which called Johnson City home. It is composed of doctors, nurses and others in the medical field.

“This is a high-level award,” Murphy said.

Murphy joined Chief Warrant Officer William Graham, Lt. Col. Tony Davis, Master Sgt. Barnes Delancy and Col. James Fetter for the evaluation to review what essentially was the 4212th USAH on paper.

The paper documentation is important, said Graham. “This book lays out how they’re doing their job.”

Graham said the competition recognizes the ones that are going over and above to do an outstanding job in the supply arena.

The competition is held for the Army Reserve, Army National Guard and Active Army. In the Reserve category, the 4212th is up against 24 other units. Last year, Lyon’s unit finished in the top four.

Award or not, the unit stands ready to serve in Operation Noble Eagle if called; but as an Army hospital unit, the mission is different than when it was designated as the 912th MASH unit.

During Desert Storm, the 912th was activated to the Middle East. “In the Army mission, supply is as important as maintenance and training. It is very important because without supplies you can’t do

anything. It’s like having a car without gas,” Graham said.

“This is a recognition program for the soldier who is down in the field doing the work,” he said.

(Story by Becky Campbell, Times-News)

171st ASG

941st Transportation Company

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. – After 101 days in North Carolina, about 170 members of the U.S. Army Reserve’s 941st Transportation Company returned home to the Charleston Naval Weapons Station on May 4, the war in Iraq never closer than their nearest television set.

“We were mobilized, but we never got the call to go to the desert,” said Capt. Anthony C. Moye of Columbia, the company commander.

In fact, the 941st never got beyond Fort Bragg, near Fayetteville. The fact that the unit never saw any action pleased some and disappointed others.

“I’m disappointed that we didn’t get any farther,” said Sgt. Benjamin Casey of Charleston, “but I’m glad to be home.”

Casey and the other reservists had less than two days’ notice they were coming home after training at Fort Bragg since early February.

The company convoyed down from Fort Bragg, with about 60 vehicles in all, to the Army Reserve Center at the weapons station.

“We were training everyday,” said Sgt. 1st Class Freddie Green of Charleston. “I was not disappointed that we didn’t go, but we were ready.”

Green, along with most members of the 941st, got at least one weekend pass while he was in North Carolina. Many families visited the soldiers in Fayetteville, and no one was ever more than a phone call away.

(Story by Terry Joyce, The Post and Courier Staff)

3rd PERSCOM

788th Medical Detachment

SAFAT, KUWAIT — Minutes after entering a hospital, a wounded soldier will be watched like a hawk wherever he goes. The people watching aren’t the enemy, but an Army Reserve unit designed to make sure the sick and wounded casualties of war don’t get lost in the shuffle.

The 678th Personnel Services Detachment, from Nashville, Tenn., keeps a list of any soldier, civilian worker, or media representative who needs medical treatment.

“We track them from the time they enter the hospital until they are done with treatment,” said Army Reserve Chief Warrant Officer Sharon Price. “We only stop the process when we have confirmation that they are back to duty.”

The 678th soldiers were some of the first people to know about Jessica Lynch and the recent POWs who were released. The soldiers got to learn how they were doing and where they were going. The soldiers said they were happy to see them on television.

“It’s nice to see the after-effects of what you’ve done,” said Army Reserve Spec. Donia Gullion, from Louisville, KY.

The unit realizes they are helping the people who are in the dangerous part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“We know we don’t have to do anything as difficult as being on the front lines,” said Price. “That’s why we’re happy to help them out anyway we can to make their lives easier.”

(Story by Spc. Cory Meyman, USAR PA)

NEWS BRIEFS

SGLI

WASHINGTON (AFPN) – The Department of Veterans Affairs has announced that premiums for the Service members Group Life Insurance will be reduced, handing military members a few extra dollars in their pockets each month.

Beginning in July, the cost for a \$250,000 policy — the maximum coverage — will drop from \$20 to \$16.25 monthly, a \$3.75 savings. The Department of Veterans Affairs reports that rates for Veterans Group Life Insurance will not change.

Tom Tower, the Department of Defense’s assistant director for military compensation, welcomed the reduced premiums, adding that anytime you put “more money in the pockets of military members, it’s always a good result.”

Premiums will also be reduced for SGLI family coverage, with rates varying among age groups. The largest saving will go to spouses 35 to 39 years old, whose premiums will be nearly cut in half. Service members currently pay \$13 for a \$100,000 family policy. That policy will cost \$7.50 beginning in July — a \$5.50 savings.

The reduced rates mean a military family will save an average of \$100 a year. VA officials estimate that service members collectively will save about \$96 million annually in premiums, and \$42 million in family coverage premiums each year.

Tower said the reduced premiums are a result of an ongoing process to keep costs down for military members.

“The VA regularly checks to see how much is paid out versus how much is collected in premiums, and whenever it seems like they have built up premium reserves, they like to reduce premiums to keep the cost to a minimum for the member,” Tower said. “Its part of the objective of the program: to provide the lowest cost possible.”

SGLI began in 1965 to meet the insurance needs of Vietnam-era service members. Before SGLI, the military provided \$10,000 policies to service members, and policies were available to active-duty military only.

Today the SGLI program provides coverage of \$250,000 to active-duty service members and most Reservists. Coverage of \$100,000 has also been provided for spouses of participating members with free coverage of \$10,000 for dependent children. Reduced levels of coverage may also be elected.

Information about the change in SGLI premiums can be found at www.insurance.va.gov, or call the office of Service members Group Life Insurance toll free at (800) 419-1473.

(American Forces Press Service)

Indefinite Re-enlistment

WASHINGTON -- Sgt. 1st Class Christopher McCreary is the first Army Reserve Solider to re-enlist under the new indefinite re-enlistment policy effective Feb. 24. The ceremony took place in the new Pentagon Memorial Chapel dedicated to the memory of those who perished on Sept. 11, 2001.

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memory of those who perished on Sept. 11, 2001.

Indefinite re-enlistments for Army Reserve soldiers became effective on Feb. 24.

Staff Sergeants (E-6) and higher with 10 or more years of service will now be able to eliminate the requirement for re-enlistments.

This change in policy will also allow Army Reserve soldiers with indefinite re-enlistments to leave the Army once receiving approval from their request for voluntary separation or retirement.

However, stop-loss policies are still in effect for identified military occupational specialties and mobilized reserve soldiers. Stop-loss and mobilized status will also take precedence over the new indefinite re-enlistment policy.

This updated re-enlistment policy will place all Army Reserve soldiers in every status in a career mode, much like officers after serving the first three years of obligated service.

“The indefinite re-enlistment benefits both soldiers and the Army as a whole. An indefinitely reenlisted soldier will never again need to worry about executing a service contract for PCS, ETS, service school, or promotion obligations,” said Sgt. Maj. Julian D. Edmondson, Personnel Policy Integrator.

“Also, information on DEERS for the soldier’s family will never expire, thereby ensuring no loss or delay of medical benefits or other entitlements. The advantage to the Army is savings (in time and dollars) over the costs that were required to reenlist or extend soldiers.”

Army Regulation 140-111, United States Army Reserve Re-enlistment Program, states eligibility guidelines for indefinite re-enlistments for Active Guard and Reserve, Troop Program Unit, Individual Ready Reserve and Individual Mobilization Augmentee soldiers.

Although the new re-enlistment policy uses the word “indefinite”, current mandatory removal rules will still be adhered to by the Army such as maximum years of service, maximum age of 60 and retention control points respective to rank.

(OCAR)

Government Travel Card

WASHINGTON – Using the government travel card when changing duty stations will no longer be permitted, and Army officials said non-authorized use of the card will be met with harsher penalties.

Congress directed the Department of Defense to develop a comprehensive disciplinary policy for military personnel and civilians who misuse the Bank of America travel card. The policy is scheduled to be released soon, said Francis A. Rago, the U.S. Army Travel Card Program manager.

In addition to discontinuing use of the travel card during permanent change-of-station moves, a memorandum from the Office of the Secretary of the Army states that cards are to be deactivated prior to departure from duty stations, unless there is temporary duty en route.

Other changes to the travel card program, effective immediately, are: commands and activities should not use the card to pay for conference registration fees; charge cards of mobilized reservists will be transferred to active-duty agencies and deactivated until use is required; cardholders are not required to use their card for travel expenses associated with mission deployments.

At the installation level, one of the first changes program coordinators made was to put the accounts

of infrequent travelers in a closed or inactive status.

“We started cutting our list of cardholders two years ago by deactivating accounts, and we have a success story now,” said Cynthia Jackson, from the Garrison Resource Management Service Center at Fort McPherson, Ga.

“The Army’s goal is for installations to keep dollars delinquent below 4.5 percent and account delinquencies below 3 percent, ours is at 1 percent,” Jackson said. “Creating a smaller list of cardholders allows us to keep tabs on our users. We know who is traveling, and what they are doing while in travel status.”

Fort McPherson is following the example set by DoD and the Army, by limiting their number of cardholders. The Army has cancelled more than 156,000 travel-card accounts since October, and currently has 280,000 open accounts. The number of accounts will fluctuate, and once current legislation is implemented, cards will not be issued to those who are not credit-worthy, Pentagon officials said.

Commanders and program coordinators have always had the responsibility of maintaining accountability of their cardholders, but according to the January memorandum from Army Secretary Thomas White’s office, travel-card coordinators now must review at least 10 percent of active accounts monthly. Investigating accounts is how Jackson said her organization keeps cardholders out of danger of nonpayment.

“If we notice that an account is 30 days late, we contact the commander or unit point of contact before the account goes past 60 days,” Jackson said.

The travel card program is simple, Rago said. Cardholders use the card only for official travel expenses, a claim for reimbursement is done immediately upon return, and split disbursement is used to pay their travel card bill.

Under split disbursement, part of a reimbursement would be sent directly to Bank of America and the balance to the traveler’s bank account.

Congress is now considering legislation that could mandate split disbursement for some cardholders.

In any case, not paying the bill could affect the user’s credit and security clearance, Pentagon officials said. At Congress’ direction, there will be a government-wide quarterly report on the travel card program, to include a statistical summary of disciplinary action taken, officials added. Misuse will also go through security channels to determine whether there should be an impact on the cardholder’s security clearance, Pentagon officials said.

Three years ago DoD mandated that federal employees use the travel card for all official travel expenses such as lodging, transportation, rental cars and other allowable charges. That changed after July 2002, when a U.S. General Accounting Office audit found numerous incidents of cardholder abuse, lack of accountability and inadequate command emphasis.

“The GAO report correctly pointed out many problems with the Army’s implementation of the travel-card program, and the Army is increasing scrutiny and taking corrective actions to resolve misuse and delinquency in the Army Travel Card Program,” Pentagon officials said.

Since March, there were 6,869 delinquent travel card accounts, equating to \$4.1 million in delinquency. Those numbers show progress in reducing the Army’s outstanding debt to Bank of America, officials said. Accounts that have past due balances made up 16.25 percent of Army accounts last year, but delinquent accounts now only total 5.24 percent.

(ArmyLink News)